

New coworking, event space to open in downtown Mound

BY EMMA LOHMAN

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Molly Williams is the CEO of The Optimists, a travel management services agency serving clients in the entertainment industry. Her newest venture, a coworking and event space called The Bright Spot, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on April 27. (Emma Lohman/Laker Pioneer)

The Bright Spot, a new coworking and event space, is set to open this month in Mound. An official ribbon-cutting ceremony was held April 27 at the site, which is located across from Mound City Hall and Shirley Hills Primary School. The building formerly housed a Frontier call center and had sat vacant for three years before it was purchased by local resident Molly Williams.

Williams is the CEO of The Optimists, a travel management services agency serving clients in the entertainment industry. The Bright Spot is her first redevelopment project and also serves as the home base for her business.

“I wanted to invest in Mound and the Westonka area,” Williams said. “I have a 6-year-old, so I’m going to be here for at least the next 12 years, and I wanted to create a space that I would love to work in.”

Many people default to coffee shops when choosing a place to work, but noise and distractions can make focus difficult. With the Westonka Library closed and the nearest coworking spaces about 25 minutes away, Williams saw a need in the community for another option.

“I drove by the building so many times wondering what could go there,” Williams said. “I didn’t just want to be a landlord, so I thought, what about a coworking space? I’ve been a member of coworking spaces in Minneapolis and worked at different locations, so I knew the vibe—and I love it. I run a business remotely, and I miss connecting with people and working in person.”

The Bright Spot is designed as a flexible, low-commitment place to work, meet, network and collaborate. The space includes 20 dedicated desks available for monthly or daily rental, along with a conversation area, flexible seating and a

kitchenette stocked with snacks and beverages. Additional amenities include a small and large conference room, a break room, a small group gathering space, two consult rooms and four private offices, two of which have already been leased. The site also offers a 51-space parking lot.

The space features plenty of natural light and is furnished with a mix of high-end pieces and secondhand furniture. The interior design was developed with input from Williams' friend Maggie Lunetta, who owns Studio Lu in Chanhassen.

"I really wanted it to be a bright and welcoming space," said Williams. "The design is about creating a rhythm so there are spaces for focus, spaces for connection, and a natural flow between the two," Williams said. "We took inspiration from spaces like the Delta Sky Club airport lounge and thought about how to bring a sense of ease and enjoyment to something that is typically more routine."

The name "The Bright Spot" was also intentional, Williams said, reflecting her love of color and aligning with the branding of her business.

Williams noted that The Bright Spot is intended to serve a wide range of users, from remote workers and out-of-town visitors to those looking to hold community meetings, classes and celebrations.

Already, Williams has seen interest from freelancers, graduate students, creative professionals and parents. As a parent herself, she understands how difficult it can be to be productive at home and hopes The Bright Spot will offer a place where people can focus during the day and leave work behind when they go home.

The Bright Spot is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., with private office tenants having 24/7 access. An app allows users to reserve desks and streamline check-in. More information and booking details are available at <https://www.thebrightspot.work/>.

